

PRESS RELEASE

Congressman John Conyers, Jr.

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Conyers Lauds Supreme Court's Decision Upholding Affirmative Action Decision Underscores Importance of Next Year's Presidential Election and Handling of Judicial Vacancies

Congressman John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI) issued the following statement concerning the Supreme Court's decisions with regard to affirmative action at the University of Michigan:

“The essence of today's decisions – upholding the use of affirmative action – is a huge victory for all Americans who care about diversity in education and equal opportunity for our citizens. Although the Court upheld the law school's program, and partially struck down the undergraduate program, the bottom line is that affirmative action will continue. To the extent changes must be made at the margins to conform to the Court's opinion, that is a small price to pay for the continuation of affirmative action.

The closeness of today's 5-4 decision underscores the stakes involved in any Supreme Court vacancies and the importance of next year's presidential election. If George Bush had his way, the Supreme Court would have struck down affirmative action. Not only did his administration file a brief against the University of Michigan, they refused to even meet with a single member of the Congressional Black Caucus to discuss the matter. That was unconscionable. Not only will equal rights be on next year's ballot, but so will the right to choose, the right to privacy, freedom of speech and freedom of religion.

I believe that the most important social issue that we face today in this new century is how a highly diverse social people – a people that will have no majority race by the middle of the century – can coexist and prosper together. Our diversity is our great strength, not our weakness, and today's decisions offer our universities a green light for preserving and strengthening that diversity in the years to come.”